

Amendments to the Abstract

Please replace the abstract with the following:

A method of avoiding deadlock during managing storage of ~~at least one~~ items in a network (102) of heterogeneous storage devices (104,106,108), ~~the heterogeneous storage devices are a local storage device and remote storage devices.~~ The method firstly detects (402) a storage event. Detection is effected by the local storage device and then the method obtains input information (404) having parameter values related to the item and the heterogeneous storage devices (104,106,108). The method then processes (406) the input information to determine a storage assignment, for storage of the item on one or more of the heterogeneous storage devices (104,106,108). The assignment is based on item-device suitability determined from a combination of at least one item selection rule ~~and at least one storage selection rule~~ and rules preventing deadlock.